

FISHERMEN'S CLAM REPORT

Surfclam - Ocean Quahog Survey Preliminary Catch Summary DELAWARE II Cape Hatteras - Georges Bank June 03 - July 21, 1999

The 1999 region-wide survey for Atlantic surfclam, *Spisula solidissima*; and Ocean Quahog, *Arctica islandica* was conducted in continental shelf waters, from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina to Georges Bank aboard the R/V DELAWARE II. The survey, by the NMFS, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, provides indices of abundance and recruitment for both species. In addition, tows were made at 153 non-random sites during the survey to evaluate gear performance.

The following charts and station data indicate the distribution of surfclams and ocean quahogs during the survey. Five-minute tows were made at the speed of 1.5 knots with a hydraulic jet dredge equipped with a 5-foot wide blade and submersible pump positioned on the dredge. Survey stations were randomly selected to give unbiased abundance measurements. Therefore, these data were not always on or near known locations of clam concentrations.

In this report, catch quantity is recorded in numbers of clams, depth in fathoms and bottom temperature in degrees Fahrenheit. Temperature data were recorded for 10 stations. Percent estimates of surfclams are also given by four categories of shell height between 0 to 4.75", 4.76 to 5.00", 5.01 to 5.50", and greater than 5.50". Distribution plots indicate relative numbers of surfclams and ocean quahogs caught on each tow.

In an effort to make this report timely, the data are summarized from unaudited catch files. Therefore, all information in this report is considered provisional and subject to change.

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